The CCHS band embarked on their 2011 quadrennial music trip to the far shores of Ireland to play two phenomenal concerts and to participate in the Dublin St. Patrick’s Day parade. The band displayed their talents by performing works by American composers hand-picked by Band Director and Conductor, Mrs. Kelly Smith.

The trip began on Sunday March, 13 and ended the following Saturday March, 19.

The cougars performed their first concert in Galway, Ireland, a city located on the Western shores of the country and their second was played in Dublin. During each concert the band played many song including: “Miss Liberty March,” “American Tapestry,” and “Shenandoah’s Simple Gifts.”

Both concerts were a success, each earning a warming ovation from the crowd.

While the band did not compete in any competition in Ireland, Mrs. Smith says the tour was a success.

“The trip was awesome. We had great fun, stayed in really nice hotels, and had some really good food,” said Mrs. Smith.

The band also was allowed to participate in the biggest annual St. Patrick’s Day parade in Dublin, Ireland. They performed the Charlotte Catholic fight song and the CCHS drum line played the U.S. military hymn, Cadence March.

Although playing the concerts and parade was the main focus of the trip, members were given also given some down time where they could visit the sights or explore the streets of Ireland.

“We were surprisingly given a lot of freedom,” said sophomore Alex Rouse, “we had to see some of the sites, but the chaperones let us go shopping or just chill without having a strict schedule.”

The chaperones that were chosen to travel alongside the band were either volunteers or picked from a random drawing.

The round trip journey was very expensive and the band needed to raise significant funds to make the trip a possibility.

“A lot of the money came from Panther’s fund raising, where students would sell things during the Panther’s games,” said Mrs. Smith, “But much funding also came from the parents.”

When the band does not travel to Ireland, they have, in past years, gone on a smaller trip to compete against other schools, where they have always been named the victor or runner-up. Mrs. Smith says she hasn’t decided where next year’s journey will be.

“We will probably go to New York or Florida, that’s where the school has gone in the past,” said sophomore Michael Murray.